

Zechariah 3:8

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at: for, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH.

Analysis

Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou, and thy fellows that sit before thee: for they are men wondered at—Transition from Joshua personally to the priesthood corporately. The *rē'ekā* (רְאֵקָה, 'thy companions/fellows') are fellow priests. The phrase *anshē mōphēt hēmmāh* (אָנָשִׁים מּוֹפֵת הֶםְמָה, 'men of a sign/portent') designates them as living prophecy—their very existence and ministry foreshadow future realities. Isaiah and his children were similarly 'signs and wonders' (Isaiah 8:18). The restored priesthood points beyond itself to greater fulfillment.

For, behold, I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH—Climactic messianic revelation. *Et-'abdi tsemach* (אֶת-עַבְדִּי צְמָח, 'my servant the Branch') combines two key titles. 'Servant' recalls Isaiah's Suffering Servant (Isaiah 42:1; 52:13; 53:11) who bears sin and justifies many. 'Branch' (*tsemach*, צְמָח) appears in Isaiah 4:2, Jeremiah 23:5; 33:15, depicting the Davidic Messiah sprouting from Jesse's seemingly dead stump (Isaiah 11:1). Zechariah uses 'Branch' four times (3:8; 6:12 twice), emphasizing Messiah's dual role as both suffering Servant and reigning King. The definite article 'THE Branch' marks Him as the unique, promised Shoot. Jesus is the Branch—from David's line, God's obedient Servant, the righteous King who will build the true temple (6:12-13).

Historical Context

The Davidic monarchy had ended with Jeconiah's exile (597 BC), and Zerubbabel the governor, though Davidic, never became king. No earthly king sat on David's throne during the Second Temple period. The 'Branch' promises that God hasn't abandoned His covenant with David (2 Samuel 7:12-16). The future Messiah will fulfill what the post-exilic community only foreshadows. The priests are 'signs' pointing to the Priest-King yet to come.

Related Passages

Romans 2:1 — Judging others

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Study Questions

1. How does the 'Branch' title combine Davidic royal lineage with new-growth imagery of resurrection?
2. In what ways did Jesus fulfill the dual role of 'Servant' and 'Branch'?
3. How does recognizing ourselves as 'signs' pointing to Christ change our sense of purpose?

Interlinear Text

שָׁמַע אַתָּה יְהוָשׁוּעַ הַכֹּהֵן הַגָּדוֹל אַתָּה יְהוָשׁוּעַ
Hear now O Joshua priest the high thou and thy fellows
H4994 H3091 H3548 H1419 H859 H7453

יְשִׁיבֵב יְמֵינֵךְ אֲנָשִׁים מִזְמָרָת הַמִּזְבֵּחַ תְּאַנְשֵׁל
that sit before wondered at the altar thou and thy fellows
H3427 H6440 H3588 H376 H4159 H1992 H3588 H2005

אֶתְנָחַ: עֵבֶד אַתָּה יְבִרְכֵנִי
for behold I will bring forth my servant the BRANCH
H935 H853 H5650 H6780

Additional Cross-References

Jeremiah 23:5 (Parallel theme): Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.

Isaiah 11:1 (Parallel theme): And there shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a Branch shall grow out of his roots:

Zechariah 6:12 (Parallel theme): And speak unto him, saying, Thus speaketh the LORD of hosts, saying, Behold the man whose name is The BRANCH; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the LORD:

Isaiah 53:2 (Parallel theme): For he shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

Isaiah 42:1 (Parallel theme): Behold my servant, whom I uphold; mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.

Jeremiah 33:15 (Parallel theme): In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land.

Isaiah 20:3 (Parallel theme): And the LORD said, Like as my servant Isaiah hath walked naked and barefoot three years for a sign and wonder upon Egypt and upon Ethiopia;

Isaiah 4:2 (Parallel theme): In that day shall the branch of the LORD be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.

Isaiah 52:13 (Parallel theme): Behold, my servant shall deal prudently, he shall be exalted and extolled, and be very high.

Isaiah 53:11 (Parallel theme): He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

